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promoted
meritoriously

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Friday: Partly Cloudy
High: 111 Low: 80
Saturday: Sunny
High: 110 Low: 82
Sunday: Partly Cloudy
High: 107 Low: 80

Serving Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Arizona

DESERT WARRIOR

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Sept. 10, 2009

Sandsharks return from Afghanistan

Lance Cpl. Jakob Schulz
Desert Warrior Staff

Approximately 150 Marines from Marine Wing Support Squadron 371 returned to the air station Monday from a seven-month deployment in Afghanistan.

These Marines made up the first of three large MWSS-371 groups scheduled to return this year.

While on deployment, the squadron provided logistical and engineering support and constructed and maintained airfields for Marine Expeditionary Brigade-Afghanistan forces, said Lt. Col. David Jones, squadron commanding officer.

The most significant contribution the squadron made was a 2.2 million square foot helicopter parking expansion at Camp Bastion in Afghanistan, said Jones. The historic project was the largest airfield constructed of aluminum matting ever in a combat zone.

“It was a huge project,” said Cpl. Daniel Wallace, MWSS-371 motor vehicle operator. “Everyone was part of it somehow.”

The expanded airfield played a pivotal part of Operation Khanjar in July, the largest heliborne operation conducted by the Corps since Vietnam.

MWSS-371 arrived in Camp Bastion in March as the MEB-A’s first element in the country, said Jones. So, the squadron prepared for the arrival of additional Marine forces helping to ensure the air combat readiness in time for arrival of other squadrons.

While in Afghanistan the squadron also completed an AH-1W Super Cobra parking area at

Camp Bastion, a C-130 Assault Strip and Unmanned Aircraft System Operation Strip at Forward Operating Base Dwyer, Afghanistan.

The strip at Dwyer quintupled the logistical recourses of personnel and supplies available to the base. Before, it took a convoy between 10-24 hours to bring materials down to the camp. Now materials can arrive in less than 30 minutes, said Sgt. Steven Rhoades, with Dwyer-based Regimental Combat Team 3.

In addition to their engineering and logistical duties, the squadron also provided all aircraft rescue and firefighting support, surveyed and improved helicopter landing zones throughout the area of operation and supplied rapid bulk fuel support to aircraft on missions, said Jones.

Even with all their achievements the Marines were happy to come back to Yuma.

The Marines arrived on station at noon and were bused to their armory to turn in weapons. They were then transported to the Sonoran Pueblo to reunite with their families and friends.

“I missed him so much,” said Wallace’s wife, Rachel. “We kept in touch with phone calls, letters, packages and MySpace.”

While being deployed can be a time of hardship, some look to positive experiences to remain upbeat.

“The best part of the deployment was when I was part of a convoy,” said Wallace. “When I was doing that I felt like I was really part of the effort.”

The Marine Corps deployed the MEB earlier this year to support NATO’s efforts to increase the security of the Afghani people and to build confidence in the Aug. 20 Afghanistan presidential elections.

Sgt. Scott Whittington contributed to this report.



Photo by Lance Cpl. Jakob Schulz

Marines from Marine Wing Support Squadron 371 disembark from a commercial airliner Monday, after returning to the station from a seven-month deployment to Afghanistan. While on deployment, MWSS-371 provided aviation ground support, as well as logistics and engineering support to Marine Aircraft Group 40. The squadron constructed the largest aluminum matting airfield project in a combat zone when they built a 2.2 million square foot helicopter parking expansion at Camp Bastion, said Lt. Col. David Jones, MWSS-371 commanding officer.

New leader of pack



Photo by Lance Cpl. Austin Hazard

1st Sgt. Max Garcia, Combat Logistics Company 16 company first sergeant, hands the unit’s colors to outgoing company commanding officer 1st Lt. Neil Bucken during a change of command ceremony at the CLC-16 compound here Friday. Maj. Nowell McKnight, incoming company commander, took the reigns of CLC-16 after serving as an inspector/instructor with the 4th Marine Logistics Group at the Paul Laverne Marine Corps Reserve Training Center in Puerto Rico. Bucken will continue to serve with CLC-16 as the executive officer.

New highway opens on Goldwater Range

Cpl. Laura A. Mapes
Desert Warrior Staff

A new area service highway opened Friday on the Barry M. Goldwater Range here.

State Route 195, also known as the Robert A. Vaughan Expressway,

runs along the westernmost border of the Goldwater Range.

The highway is a truck route designed to divert traffic from the central business areas in Yuma, Somerton and San Luis.

An overpass was built west of the station’s rifle range, to allow highway traffic to travel without interfering with range traffic.

The alignment of the road doesn’t impact any of the training on the range, said Thomas Manfredi, retired station planning and liaison officer.

Route 195 begins at the San Luis II Port of entry on the Arizona-Mexico border and ends at Interstate 8 along Araby Road.

The new state route will not affect traffic traveling along Avenue 3E.

FY09 ending with fewest off-duty deaths since ’05

Cpl. Pete Zrioka
Desert Warrior Staff

As fiscal year 2009 and the 101 Days of Summer wrap up this month, off-duty deaths are at their lowest since 2005.

With 53 deaths Corpwide, the figure is down by nine from the previous year’s 62, according to the Naval Safety Center. This is the lowest figure since the 55 off-duty fatalities in 2005.

As of Aug. 19, there were 39 motor vehicle deaths in this fiscal year, 12 less than the 51 in the last.

“There are some very positive trends as we near the fiscal year finish line,” said Brian Lindstrom, station ground safety manager.

Out of the 39 vehicular fatalities, 14 were motorcycle-related, nearly half of what it was in 2008.

“I think the attention it got was the driving force in bringing the [motorcycle] numbers down,” said Scott Pearce, station traffic safety program manager. “People knew they were under scrutiny and that slowed things down.”

Ross Chapa, station occupational safety specialist, attributes the decrease in motorcycle fatalities to training, registration of motorcycles and personal protective equipment changes.

In May 2008, Gen. James Conway, commandant of the Marine Corps, published All Marine Message 14/08, requiring all Marine motorcyclists to report bike ownership to their commands for verification of each rider’s license, registration and training.

In addition to stricter guidelines on protective equipment and registration, the Department of the Navy contracted Cape Fox Professional Services

in September 2008 to provide experienced traffic safety instructors for Navy and Marine Corps installations in the United States.

“Cape Fox increased what we had for training capabilities in the way that they provided a dedicated source for motorcycle training. They also bring a lot of experience to the table,” said Chapa.

Noncommissioned officers were also used to combat rising vehicular deaths when they were tasked last year with taking responsibility for their subordinates’ safety, to include denying leave and liberty on the basis of safety risks, according to White Letter 2-08, published by Conway in April 2008.

While fiscal year 2008 recorded zero Yuma off-duty deaths, three Yuma Marines accounted for 2009’s vehicular fatalities and two others were included in recreational deaths.

“Safety is kind of like a speed bump,” said Chapa. “If you have traffic going 100 miles an hour, you put a speed bump there to slow it down. That’s how we approach an issue—we find the trends and take action to stop it or slow it down.”

The Corps sees the biggest spike in accidents and deaths within 90 days of Marines returning from deployment, said Chapa.

As of now, Marines are required to take safety training within 30 days from returning from deployment, said Chapa. It’s an attempt to transition them from a field mindset to a safe garrison one.

Training and checklists aside, safety still starts with an individual, said Chapa.

“We, as individuals, need to ensure we’re doing everything right, so we can avoid things going wrong,” said Chapa.

Chapel Call

“REMEMBER SEPTEMBER 11TH”

Lt. James Finley
Station Catholic Chaplain

Thousands of words have been uttered or written about the horror that turned a glorious late summer’s day into a day of indescribable agony.

As we viewed the smoldering wreckage in New York, Pennsylvania and the Pentagon, our hearts were broken and no words could mend them.

Time has passed. We live day by day, almost forgetful of what happened until we turn the calendar and see that day approaching, now for the eighth time.

Of course, there are other reminders. Frequent deployments, casualties and distress mark the lives of our military.

As Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz discovered

that she was not in Kansas any longer, we found we are no longer living in the Garden of Eden, safe from all harm.

Words uttered and written, seek to assuage the painful memory. The pain remains. Valorous deeds seek to right the wrong done. New wrongs occur. We strive for justice. We long for peace. Is there no hope? Is there no balm in Gilead?

We remember the promise of one who said he will wipe away every tear and bind up every wound and lift every burden.

On this Sept. 11, the small chapel will be open from 8-11 a.m. and the large chapel from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come with your words and your wordlessness, your questions and concerns.

Let the one who is greater than our hearts speak to your heart. May he speak peace to his people.



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Marines meritoriously promoted

Cpl. Laura A. Mapes
Desert Warrior Staff

Four station Marines pinned on meritorious rank here Sept. 2 after winning promotion boards for Marine Corps Installations West and the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

Each board was the first board for the four Marines and because of their dedication to duty and outstanding conduct, they were rewarded.

Lance Cpl. Michael Angelo, a Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron administration clerk, thanked his noncommissioned officer leadership for guiding him and setting an example for him to emulate.

“They taught me everything I know. If it weren’t for them I would know nothing,” said Angelo. “They are the main reason I won the meritorious board and got promoted.”

Cpl. Yao Lee, station headquarters administration clerk, and Cpl. Bryce Sparks, station combat photographer, were promoted as well.

This was an exceptionally sig-



Photo by Cpl. Laura A. Mapes

Station sergeant major, Sgt. Maj. Terry Stanford, reads the noncommissioned officer's creed to Cpl. Yao Lee during his promotion ceremony on the station parade field Sept. 2. Lee was meritoriously promoted to corporal after winning a Marine Corps Installations West board.

nificant day for Lee, as his expecting wife and other members of his family were in attendance.

“I felt powerful having my family in the crowd,” said Lee. “The feeling of pride I had was better than graduating boot camp, which was a huge thing for me.”

Cpl. Brian Garcia, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 13 cryogenics technician won the meritorious board for the 3rd MAW.

“I won because I was confident and had the proper training and self-motivation that my staff NCOs instilled in me,” said Garcia.

Garcia was not the only one who was confident in his leadership abilities.

“I’m very proud of my son for getting this. I know what a responsibility this kind of thing is,” said Garcia’s father, who attended his son’s promotion ceremony.

DESERT WARRIOR

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Commanding Officer

Capt. Rob Dolan
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Gunnery Sgt. Bill Lisbon
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Staff Sgt. Ryan O’Hare
Press Chief

Lance Cpl. Josue Aguirre
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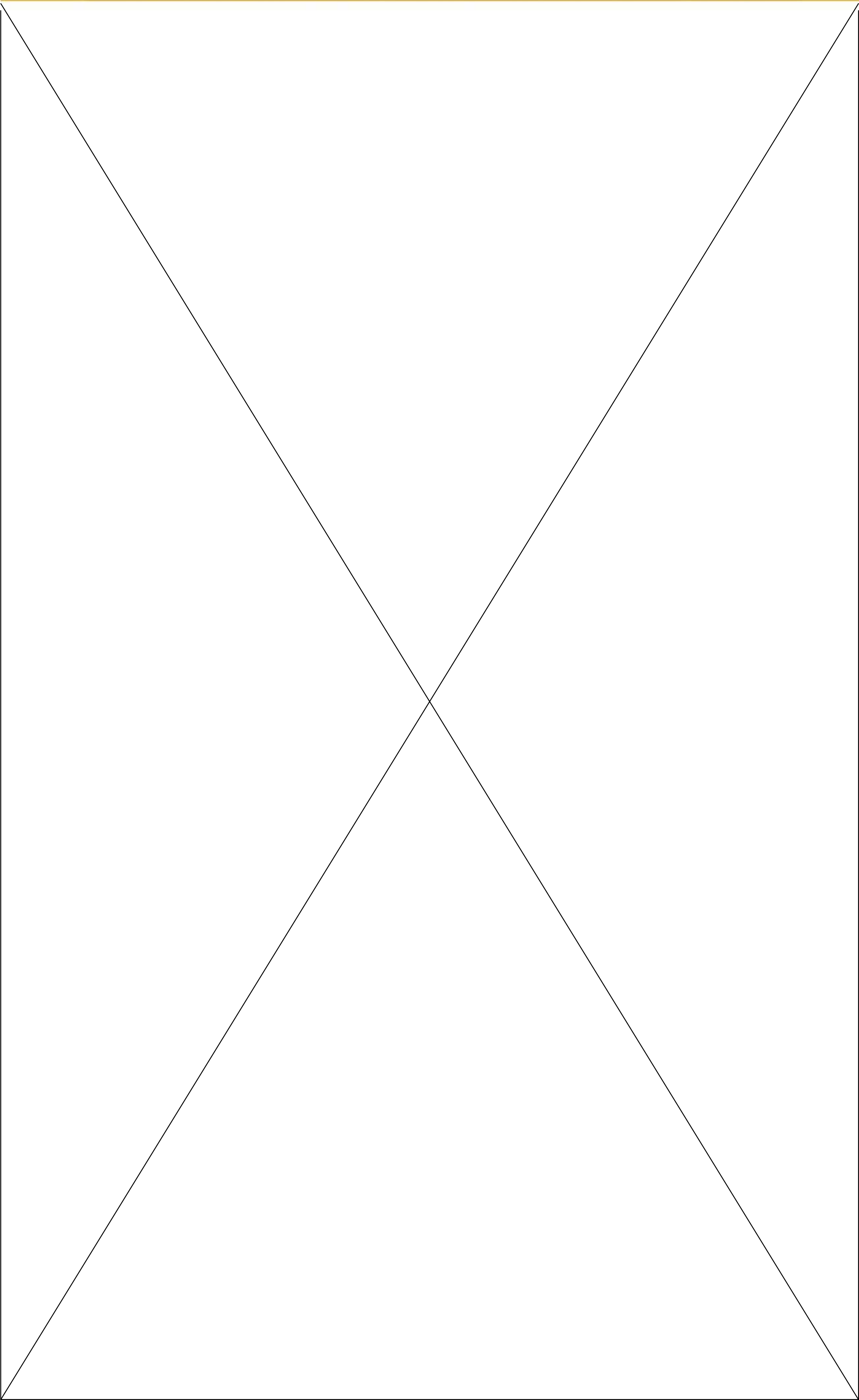
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Ads

Ads



AT EASE

Award, new track reflect station’s strive for safety

Lance Cpl. Jakob Schulz
Desert Warrior Staff

The station received the Motorcycle Safety Foundation 2008 Outstanding Military Base Award during a ribbon cutting ceremony at the station’s new motorcycle course Sept. 1.

Accident statistics, the number of riders who completed safety courses and the amount of training each instructor received were factors that helped secure the award for the station.

“Yuma has always been at the forefront of motorcycle safety programs,” said Scott Pearce, station traffic safety program manager.

The station’s newly constructed motorcycle track is the kind of contribution to motorcycle safety that MSF looks for when choosing who should receive the award, said Tim Buche, foundation president.

The track is located on the corner of Frazier Avenue and North Ordnance Road, south of Ramada Field in the old station ordnance compound.

The course was put to use just minutes after its opening with a sport bike riders course.

In addition to the 180- by 220-foot track, station safety plans to build another smaller track, said Pearce. The smaller track will allow safety instructors to conduct courses when the class sizes are small. This will give the instructors a better chance to make corrections than on the larger track.

The track will allow motorcycle safety instructors to hold classes as needed, said



Photo by Lance Cpl. Jakob Schulz

Marines wait for a ribbon cutting ceremony to begin at the new motorcycle safety track here Sept. 1. Station safety uses the new track and its courses to combat Marine motorcycle-related deaths.

Mike Cassell, station safety rider coach.

Previously, the courses were held off station at the Yuma Civic Center. However, this caused logistical problems.

“We would have to haul the trainer bikes all the way out there and have the Marines come there,” said Cassell. “With this new one, we can just leave the bikes there.”

In addition to motorcycle safety courses, dirt bike and all-terrain vehicle courses will be available as well on the dirt behind the pavement.

Station safety has offered motorcycle classes since 1986, said Pearce. However, safety classes have only been required by the Corps since August 2002.

This is the second time the station has received the award, the first being in 2005.

Additionally, the Marine Corps safety division won the Outstanding Military Branch Award from MSF at the same time the station received its award.

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation is an internationally recognized nonprofit organization that develops rider education and training programs for public and government use.

Smart & Safe Calendar

The following traffic safety courses are offered on station:

Basic Motorcycle Riders Course - Sept. 15-17, 29-Oct. 1

Required for all active duty personnel who ride a motorcycle on or off base as well as anyone who rides on base. All personnel must possess a valid state-issued motorcycle endorsement or permit. Motorcycles, gloves and helmets are provided. The 15-hour course is held 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the first day and 6-11 a.m. on the second and third days.

Experienced Motorcycle Riders Course - Oct. 6

Required for all personnel within Marine Forces Pacific and its subordinate units who ride cruiser-style motorcycles. It must be completed within 120 days after completing the Basic Motorcycle Riders Course. Others who are eligible may also attend. Personnel must possess a state-issued motorcycle endorsement, motorcycle and personal protective equipment. The course is held from 6-11 a.m.

Military Sport Bike Riders Course - Sept. 22, Oct. 20

Required for all personnel who ride sport bike-style motorcycles and must be completed within 120 days after completing the Basic Motorcycle Riders Course. Personnel must possess a state-issued motorcycle endorsement, motorcycle and PPE. The course is held from 6-11 a.m.

Alive at 25 - Sept. 21, Oct. 5, Oct. 19

Required for all Marines under 26 years of age. Military dependents under 26 may also attend. The course is held from 8 a.m. to noon.

ATV Course and Dirt Bike Course

These courses are required for anyone who rides an ATV or dirt bike on Department of Defense property. However, the classes are available to all ATV or dirt bike riders. Participants must supply their own ATV or dirt bike and PPE. Separate five-hour classes are held on an as-needed basis for each type of vehicle. Call the traffic safety office to apply.

Eligibility: Unless specified above, all courses are available to active duty, dependents, retirees, active reservists and Department of Defense employees. Contractors are not eligible.

Classes are first-come, first-served and class schedules are subject to change. Registered students will be informed of course locations and any changes prior to the start of class.

All motorcycle courses must be scheduled through the student’s unit motorcycle representative. All other courses must be scheduled by a staff noncommissioned officer or above.

In order to register for any motorcycle classes, riders must have motorcycles and PPE inspected by a unit motorcycle representative or at the station traffic safety office.

For more information, call the traffic safety office at 928-269-5769 or 928-269-5699.

In Theaters

Thursday
Away We Go (R)
7 p.m.

Friday
Bandslam (PG)
6 p.m.

The Ugly Truth (R)
9 p.m.

Saturday
Aliens in the Attic (PG)
4 p.m.

Funny People (R)
7 p.m.

Sunday
G-Force (PG)
5 p.m.

Monday
The Ugly Truth (R)
7 p.m.

Tuesday
Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince (PG)
7 p.m.

Wednesday
Free admission
G-Force (PG)
7 p.m.

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Call 928-269-2358 or visit
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MESS HALL MENU



HOURS OF OPERATION

Weekdays

Breakfast: 5:30 - 7:30 a.m.
Lunch: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Dinner: 4 - 6 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday

Breakfast/Brunch: 9 a.m. to noon
Dinner: 3 - 5 p.m.

Prices

For military without meal cards
Breakfast: \$2.30
Lunch and dinner: \$4.25
Weekend brunch: \$4.85
Weekend dinner: \$5.95

THURSDAY

LUNCH: Baked Chicken
Beef & Vegetable Soup
Spaghetti w/ Meat Sauce
Garlic Cheese Potatoes
Chicken Gravy
Club Spinach

DINNER: Roast Beef
Cajun Shrimp
& Sausage Penne
Lyonnaise Potatoes
Broccoli
Spanish-style Beans

FRIDAY

LUNCH: Clam Chowder
Fried Fish
Fried Shrimp
Pork Chop Suey
Potatoes Au Gratin
Steamed Rice

DINNER: Cajun Chicken
Braised Beef & Noodles
Scalloped Potatoes
Southern-style Greens
Mixed Vegetables
Jalapeño Corn Bread

SATURDAY

BRUNCH: Eggs
Breakfast Pizza
Hot & Cold Cereals
Pancakes & Waffles
Chicken Breast Sandwich
... and more

DINNER: Steak Ranchero
Cream of Mushroom Soup
Roast Turkey
Mashed Potatoes
Southwestern Rice
Broccoli

SUNDAY

BRUNCH: Eggs
Hot Farina & Cold Cereals
Sausage Casserole
Baked Sausage
Chicken Breast Sandwich
... and more

DINNER: Navy Bean Soup
Grilled Steak
Vegetable Lasagna
Baked Potato
Southern-style Greens
Vegetable Stir Fry

MONDAY

LUNCH: Minestrone Soup
Roast Beef
Fried Chicken
Steam Rice
Parsley-buttered Potatoes
Corn Bread

DINNER: Turkey A la King
Jerk Pork Loin
Buttered Egg Noodles
Islander’s Rice
Broccoli
California Vegetable Blend

TUESDAY

LUNCH: Chili Macaroni
Fish Vera Cruz
Grilled Cheese Sandwich
Spanish Rice
Tangy Spinach
Spanish-style Beans

DINNER: Beef Pot Pie
Cream of Broccoli Soup
Bayou Chicken
Orange Rice
Louisiana-style Squash
Cheese Drop Biscuits

WEDNESDAY

LUNCH: Pasta Toscano
Bean w/ Bacon Soup
Parmesan Basil Chicken
Italian-roasted Potatoes
Cream-style Corn
French-style Green Beans

DINNER: Yankee Pot Roast
Pork Teriyaki Stir Fry
Confetti Rice
Buttered Egg Noodles
Green Beans
Corn



Events

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